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23. Accounts and audit

(2) The accounts of the Authority shall be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India at such intervals as maybe specified by him and any expenditure incurred in connection with such audit shall be payable by the Authority to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

(Explanation : For the removal of doubts, it is hereby declared that the decisions of the Authority taken in the discharge of its functions under clause (b) of sub-section(l) and sub-section (2) of section 11 and section 13, being matters appealable to the Appellate Tribunal, shall not be subject to audit under his section).

(3) The Comptroller and Auditor General of India and any other person appointed by him in connection with the audit of the accounts of the Authority shall have the same rights and privileges and authority in connection with such audit as the Comtroller and Auditor General generally has, in connection with the audit of the Government accounts and, in particular, shall have the right to demand the production of books, accounts, connected vouchers and other documents and papers and to inspect any of the offices of the Authority.

'Bribery case against income tax officers'

2502. SHRIRAJUPARMAR:
SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the news-item titled "CBI recovers huge assets from I.T. man", appearing in the Asian Age, New Delhi dated the 26th June, 2001;

(b) if so, the details of the report and the number of Income Tax Officials who have been nabbed red-handed while accepting bribe during the last three years;

(c) what action has been taken against each of them; and

(d) what steps Government are contemplating to take to enhance the image of Income Tax Department in the eyes of public?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The newspaper report refers to the search conducted by the CBI in the case of Shri. A.K. Purwar CIT (A), Mumbai.

(b) the detailed investigation report from the CBI is awaited. Therefore, it is not possible to give exact details on the search conducted. During the last three years, as per the information available, 16 Income Tax officials were nabbed red-handed while accepting bribe.

(c) such officials are immediately suspended and thereafter action is taken by way of launching of prosecution or initiation of Departmental proceedings or both on the basis of the evidence gathered by the CBI.

(d) In the Income Tax Department the restructured set up has been put in place under which there will be close monitoring by the Supervisory Officers, which will prevent corruption to a large extent. The vigilance machinery of this Department has also been strengthened by upgrading the existing Directorate of Income Tax (Vigilance) to the level of Directorate General of Income Tax (Vigilance). Four Regional Directorates of Income Tax (Vigilance) have been created at Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai. It shall improve to a large extent the image of the Income Tax Department in the eyes of the public.

PLR in respect of sick Units

2503. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to advise banks to charge PLR or lower rates to sick units expected to be viable;

(b) if so, details of the scheme; and

(c) if not, whether Government are not making the revival of such sick units more difficult?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) The interest rates are charged by Banks on the loans advanced to industrial units including sick units as per the guidelines of Reserve Bank of India.

As per the extant guidelines issued by RBI the following reliefs/ concessions in interest rates are applicable for revival of sick industrial units and sick SSI Units.